

Commission on Aging
May 25, 2023

Welcome—David Engel, Chair

Roll Call conducted via screen shot. Those in attendance: David Engel, Virginia Cain, Joyce Dubow, Janice Zalen, Marsha Weber, Morris Klein, Mary Sweeney, Beverly Rollins, Jean Dinwiddie, Ric Ricciardi, Yvette Monroe, Ryan Wilson, Kendell Matthews, Mona Grieser, Laurie Pross, Betsy Carrier, Wayne Berman, Katie Smith, Barbara Selter, Art Williams

Staff and other attendees: Pazit Aviv, Tremayne Jones, Cecily Coleman, Marcia Pruzan, Austin Heyman, Stacy Sigler, Tara Clemons Johnson, Kuo-Hwa Wang, Shawn Brennan, Jose Ortiz, Chuck Kauffman, Sara Swarr, Cecily Coleman, Somer Cross, Denise Isreal, Melinda Hite, Nancy McMahon, Elizabeth Boyd, Carmel Roques, Jenna Crawley

AAA Director update

- Pazit Aviv presented on behalf of Dr. Patrice McGhee, Director Area Agencies on Aging
- The Area Plan that will guide the AAA in the future was submitted on May 23 to the State; feedback is expected on June 12.
- Lorraine Driscoll died on May 10th. She was a long-time staff member who contributed to the work of the aging community in the county.
- Odile's Brunetto's retirement party will be held on June 13. RSVPs are requested by May 30.

Presentations

David introduced Carmel Roques, MD Department of Aging, Secretary and Jenna Crawley, Director of Multi-sector Engagement and Age Friendly

Carmel Roques: Prior to appointment as the Maryland Secretary of Aging, Carmel Roques served as President and CEO of Keswick, a 138-year-old not-for-profit community healthcare provider. She led the organization's transformation from a traditional long term care provider to a fully integrated health care resource for the community by introducing an innovative approach to medical and non-medical health opportunities and challenges. She has served on many community boards including The Village Learning Place, The Maryland American Diabetes Association, Friends and Foundation of Howard County Library, and currently Maryland Humanities. She has also served on the Maryland Commission on Aging, the Maryland Medicare/Medicaid Advisory Committee, the Maryland Coalition on Mental Health and Aging, and the Maryland CARE Transformation Steering Committee. Ms. Roques was past Chair of the Maryland Philanthropy Network and LifeSpan Network.

Jenna Crawley: Jenna Crawley is the Director, Multisector Planning for Aging (MPA) and Age Friendly Initiatives for the MD Dept of Aging. Prior to this appointment, Jenna was the director of the Howard County Area Agency on Aging. She worked for the District of Columbia Department of Healthcare Finance, and was a Chief Social Worker at Washington Hospital Center.

Secretary Roques discussed the rationale for a Multi-sector Plan for Aging. Of the 6.7 million people living in Maryland, 1.7 million are over age 60, the oldest demographic in the state; 314,961 are 85+. Older adults require more comprehensive, coordinated services than members of younger age cohorts. Governor Moore wants MD to be a good place for older people to live and age in.

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She described the functions of the Department of Aging: The department is one of the smallest departments both in size of staff and funding. The Older Americans Act and the state provide most of its funding. Therefore, to have impact, the department must be able to collaborate and to leverage funding and policy opportunities in other departments, such as housing, planning, and transportation.

The Department is mandated to: advocate for the well-being for older adults at all levels of government. It is required to review policy, formulate, and enact policies to benefit older adults. Its goal is to empower Marylanders to age comfortably and with dignity by making the state an aging-friendly state by increasing access to affordable housing and the ability to age in place; addressing elder abuse and raising awareness among staff and constituents of this issue; improving long-term care options by addressing affordability and quality challenges; and revitalizing the department by filling departmental vacancies and addressing funding priorities. The Secretary acknowledged that these are tall orders but she intends to make a good start at addressing the multiple challenges that exist.

The Secretary described the "Big Picture": today, people live longer than they ever have before—often until 100 years of age. Indeed, there is a global shift in this direction. Accordingly, the Longevity Center at Stanford developed "The New Map of Life" that argues for the need to rethink and reorganize how we address longevity. There are huge challenges that must be addressed. We need to eliminate old assumptions that aging is a costly burden on society and to recognize aging as a resource. Education does not have to be confined to one's younger years, but rather can be spread over decades. We must create longevity-ready communities, permit more work years with more flexibility, learn throughout life. Modern technology will help in this regard. People can often work well into their 80s and 90s. Society must take advantage of gained wisdom and experience. We want people to live purposeful lives, across the 100-year lifespan. We want them to be healthy, financially secure, socially connected.

In summary, to achieve the goals of the New Map of Life, seven guiding principles pertain: age diversity is a net positive; invest in future centenarians to achieve big returns; align health spans to life spans; prepare to be amazed by the future of aging; work more years with more flexibility; learn throughout life; and build longevity-ready communities.

Jenna Crawley described three essential, interrelated components of the plan: the State Plan on Aging, the Age-Friendly Action Plan, and the Multi-Sector Plan for Aging, the latter of which builds on the first two and represents the "how" we will achieve the desired goals. It is forward-thinking and constitutes a 10-year roadmap. We must figure out how to work better together. It must be a public, equitable, inclusive, transparent process. We must acknowledge the lifetime experience of discrimination. Finally, the plan must be person-centered. The system must fit the people who are receiving the services.

In MD, there are 11 jurisdictions that are engaged in the Age-Friendly initiative. Nationally, there are several states that have identified best practices. There are lessons to be learned from these activities. This is new and transformative time and the Department will be seeking input from the public via coalition building, workgroups, committees, and data collection and analysis. Ms. Crawley identified the multitude of stakeholders who must be involved in the multi-sector planning process, including government agencies, the legislative branch, the private sector, philanthropies, and service delivery providers. Next steps are to convene, collaborate, catalyze, and importantly, disrupt. She presented a timeline that begins with a learning collaborative in the spring of 2024 to receive and consider technical expertise to help implement and guide the plan during the next 10 years. This will involve stakeholder engagement, executive orders, and implementation. It should be noted that the Governor already has a master plan for aging but Ms. Crawley distinguished this from the multi-sector plan whose focus is on engaging multiple stakeholders. Throughout this process, accountability will be key. Performance indicators and metrics must be developed to measure and assess whether identified goals have been achieved.

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Ms. Crawley offered suggestions as to how the CoA can be involved to help advance the goals of the Department: share information about current plans and initiatives in the county; engage by relaying the specific needs of those living in MOCO; champion and advocate for a comprehensive MPA, and assist with the development of recommendations.

Following the formal presentations, Secretary Roques and Ms. Crawley entertained questions. Every questioner praised the scope and content of the information that was presented.

- Beverly invited the Department of Aging staff to work with an existing working group on a plan to address the reform of long-term care and supports. Ms. Crawley welcomed this invitation.
- Chuck urged more emphasis on the inclusion of the private sector. The Secretary agreed and noted that the governor has set up commission to focus on involving the private sector in policy development and planning for MD's future. Secretary Roques wants to align the MPA process with this commission to ensure private sector engagement.
- Austin noted the Vital Living Initiative developed in 1999 introduced the concept of intergenerational relationships. He mentioned the previous secretary had been involved in a similar effort. He stressed research that had been conducted that identified the economic benefits of longevity. In response, the Secretary emphasized that she is not interested in reinventing the wheel and urged everyone to share information. She noted that they are engaged in an iterative process and change is incremental.
- Morris mentioned that the largest impediment in reforming long-term services and supports is cost. He asked if the department would have a role in how to pay for long-term care and how could the CoA help. The Secretary is talking to counterparts in the Health Department to discuss opportunities available through federal Medicaid waiver program that might permit expansion of what gets covered. State funding also may offer some opportunity. Some programs that are gap-filling have not grown in 10 years although the population has grown enormously. Collaboration with other departments to leverage funding and policy opportunities is critical. She is also is engaging with legislative members to ask about the prospects for more funding. To make the case for the need, there must be a very clear description of proposed programs that are effective and equitable. But without funding and policy, she predicts there will be no success. She recognizes this is a long process and we are in early days. She wants to leverage the work that has already begun.
- Pazit mentioned that coordination was essential and connecting programs was critical at the local level. She mentioned the nursing home inspection issue and noted the importance of coordinating with the Department of Health to obtain a resolution.
- Wayne mentioned that the CoA had hosted a forum on the role of technology as a means of helping older adults age in place and suggested this be included in the MPA. The Secretary mentioned that the MD Commission on Aging did support the application of technology. She sees an avenue to make the connection through the state commission. She mentioned two sources that promote housing for older adults that includes housing and health resources:
<https://www.here.life/>
Ryan Frederick is an internationally recognized thought leader, speaker, author, innovator, developer, and strategy consultant specializing in place and healthy longevity with nearly 20 years in the field.
<https://www.a2collective.ai/>
The a2 Collective represents the Artificial Intelligence and Technology Collaboratories (AITC) for Aging Research program, which is dedicated to helping Americans live longer, healthier lives through the application of artificial intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies.
- Mona mentioned the need to work with the Labor Department that sets standards for the interior of housing to promote universal design to help people remain in their homes as long as possible. The Secretary agreed that current housing stock is not sustainable for aging in place.
- Barbara mentioned the workforce issue and mentioned the multi-stakeholder taskforce that reported on its status in MOCO with recommendations. The Secretary mentioned the unique issues of each

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jurisdiction regarding workforce development. She is interested in information at the local level and stressed its importance in the department's planning.

- Chuck said long-term care was solvable by means of various policy options. He also noted homelessness must be addressed. The Secretary said she had spoken to the insurance commissioner to examine new models for long-term care services and support, particularly its financing.

Commission on Aging Old Business

- *Approval of April CoA minutes*- approved with no objections
- *Update on action items from previous meeting*
 - David attended the Department of Recreation's Centenarian Celebration with Odile Brunetto. The Commission on Aging was given a shout out by the speakers including Mr. Elrich, County Executive. 76 centenarians were celebrated.
 - David attended the interagency meeting on homelessness. There is a new chief of the Department. (See below)
 - Barbara gave her report on the workforce taskforce to the AIC committee
 - There is still action no decision on whether to post on NextDoor
 - David noted with sadness the passing of Commissioner Nanine Meiklejohn and acknowledge her significant contribution to the Commission and her passion for justice for all. The CoA will donate to Planned Parenthood in her honor.
- David also noted the passing of Lorraine Driscoll, a helpful supporter of the Commission who had just recently been appointed to run the County Caregiving Support program.
- The Technology Forum, held on May 4 was a success (see below for Wayne's report).
- David thanked the commission for engaging in the meetings with councilmembers.
- Attendance at Affordable housing Summit was supported by the CoA. Three commissioners attended. (See below for their reports and reactions.)
- David attended a meeting addressing the reboot of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) to address affordable housing, specifically with regard to Senior Housing and the MPDU program. There was a cross section of stakeholders in attendance, including from the County – Patrice, Odile, and Pazit; representatives from HOC, the CE office, Park and Planning, Elouise Mayne from MDOA, Victory Housing, Erickson Senior Living, and Brooke Grove Senior living communities. Somer Cross from DHCA is leading the effort to develop a new and improved model for adding MPDU units to new senior housing developments. It is a complex task due to the payment models of senior living communities. Many of these models include service fees -- which often outprice affordability levels for Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) tenants. The MPDU law was designed when age-restricted housing in Montgomery County did not include services. A new solution is needed to address service fee considerations while maintaining affordable housing opportunities. The purpose of a new workgroup is to determine how to either 1) provide affordable units in market rate senior independent living units or 2) provide a reasonable alternative solution.
- David attended the Interagency Commission on Homelessness with the new Chief, Christine Hong from the DHHS Services to End and Prevent Homelessness (SEPH). Last month, David raised the issue of homelessness and requested the AIC to put Homelessness on its agenda. Specifically, the Point in Time (PIT) study, (a copy of which was shared with the commission) noted the spike in the number of homeless people in Montgomery County. Regionally, there was an 18% increase in

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homelessness from 2022. In Montgomery County the increase was even higher – an increase from 313 persons to 894. Evictions, the end of COVID rent relief, rental increases, landlord discrimination, the lack of health care supports for older adults, and the inability of larger displaced families to afford housing are all cited as reasons for the dramatic increase. While the Commission and DHHS has a goal of Zero for All by 2025, this is a great challenge. David offered collaboration with the attendees and the CoA to help address this issue. He expressed particular concern for the incidence of senior homelessness. Ilana Branda, Deputy Chief, reported: more than half (57%) of all homeless adults without children are over 45 years old, 35% are over 55, and 10% are 65 years or older. Research shows that people experiencing homelessness die on average 30 years younger than the average person in the United States. Thus, individuals with a history of homelessness age show signs of aging at a higher rate: for example, homeless individuals age 45 may have similar health issues as someone in his/her 70s. To address this problem, increased partnership, and access to medical and supportive services for older adults, especially those who are homeless is required.

Chair's Report

Review of recent events:

- The Public Forum was a huge success. David thanked Commissioners for their tremendous contribution. There was a packed room at Bohrer Park and another 144 who registered for online viewing with 84 were online.
- David congratulated the Commissioners on conducting 11 meetings between March 24th and May 1st plus a visit with the County Executive at our March 23rd meeting. Twenty Commissioners participated in meeting with the Councilmembers.
- Wayne, Mona, and David attended the Affordable Housing Summit on May 5th.
- The June 22nd Commission on Aging meeting will be in person at the Wheaton Recreation Center at 9:30am. A lunch will be provided by the Senior Nutrition
- David noted a few recent events of interest:
 - *Montgomery County Recreation's 55+ BBQ Bonanza*
 - *NCOA Connect:* The National Council on Aging Policy Positions: Addressing the Direct Care Workforce Crisis and Caregiving that will involve an update on how/whether Congress is addressing the nation's burgeoning direct care workforce crisis.
 - *Thursday, June 15 The Mont County Elder/ Vulnerable Adult Abuse Task Force (13th Annual MoCo World Elder Abuse Awareness Day)* to be held at the Holiday Park Senior Center. There will be presentations by the State's Attorney's Office, Law Enforcement, Office of Consumer Protection, and Adult Protective Services
- **David's Insights**
 - There are 5 steps to making change: Awareness, desire, knowledge, action and perseverance. He focused on awareness and illustrated this by describing the tireless efforts of Commissioner Janice Zalen to advocate that the state addresses the critical nursing home inspection issue in Montgomery County.

Commented [FP1]: Should the program title I added in parentheses be noted?

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- **Budget Meetings Debrief**

- David reported that after observing the deliberations of the county council as it considered the FY24 budget, his impression is that many councilmembers are not aware of the Services for Seniors budget line items. He asserted that the commission must offer more details about the budget impacts of CoA priority requests. Councilmembers want to know what each request is going to cost, how many full-time employees are needed, and what is the cost per FTE.
 - At the end of the Budget negotiations, each Councilmember provided a statement about how challenging the Budget was and their agreements and disagreements with the County Executive's proposed budget. Five councilmembers provided press releases of their statements. None of these statements highlighted or specifically identified programs focused on older adults. David argued that we need to continue to press our point to elected officials to not only budget for the older generation but to include mention of this population cohort in their routine pronouncements and discourse. The Commission must keep an Aging and Disability Marketing position in our FY25 Budget priorities. It appears that the issue of aging and the needs of the older adult population are not prominent features or top of the mind issues in the minds of councilmembers.

- **Affordable Housing Summit 2023**

Marc Elrich: Discussed that there are 40,000 housing units approved. They remain unbuilt because prices will be too high above affordability. We need to get \$450 per square foot development costs down to \$250 to be affordable. What can we do? 1) rent stabilization; 2) change the MPDU laws; 3) develop county land as affordable housing; 4) add opportunity for more home ownership; 5) No net loss in affordable housing when redeveloping properties; 6) change the zoning laws

Chelsea Andrews, Exec Dir. HOC, discussed the 40,000 people on the HOC waiting list. 13,000 people have housing vouchers. It takes 6 ½ years to get a voucher. HOC develops, finances, and manages properties in Mont. County. In 2021, HOC received \$100,000,000 in funds.

David reported that a lot of statistics were cited but not a lot of solutions. Montgomery County needs cooperation of private and public partnerships to add housing units. Andrew Friedson discussed the use of County parking lots for co-locating housing.

Budget Report

- David noted that the commission spent \$250 to cover registration fees for three commissioners to attend the affordable housing conference.
- *Debrief on Public Forum*
 - Wayne thanked those who worked on the Forum and noted that the AIC had followed up with action items that emanated from the Forum. The working group will continue to work on ideas on an ongoing basis. David noted there is a good recording on YouTube of the Forum and that the presenters' slides will be available on the website.
- *Debrief on Affordable Housing Conference:* Mona- the important talk was Elrich's description of the problem of housing in the county and that many workers cannot afford to live here. Also, the lack of locations for housing. She was disappointed that developers were not present. The county has approved 40,000 units but these have not been built. There are also 40,000 people on the HOC waiting list—it takes 6 and one-half years to get a housing voucher!
David- there were a lot of statistics, but no solutions. The need for partnerships is important. The developers need to be willing to build and it remains very expensive which accounts for the lack of participation from the private sector. Rent stabilization is also important as is changing the MPDU laws.

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There is an interest in expanding home ownership. Wayne was surprised that MPDUs was so low in this county. Current laws are outdated- this can be an advocacy opportunity. Learned what the missing middle is. Arlington has introduced legislation to address the housing needs of this population. Marcia asked if the issue of rent stabilization was raised. David noted that newer properties are excluded from both bills that have been introduced at the council

- Debrief on Councilmember Budget Meetings
 - Montgomery County Council Votes to Approve Preliminary Agreement on \$6.7 Billion Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget and Amendments to the FY23-28 Capital Improvements Program Focused on Education, Housing and Economic Development
 - The Council supported WorkSource Montgomery, which is the County's lead workforce development organization, with an over \$2 million appropriation. This is an increase of almost three percent compared to the previous year.
 - **Transportation:**
 - Nearly \$300,000 in funding is included to support the Transportation Service Improvement Fund These are not additional funds. The grants system will be revamped.
 - **Health and Human Services**
 - The Council funded more than \$480 million for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), which is an increase of almost 11 percent compared to last year's budget.
 - \$66 million for Aging and Disability Services.
 - It also funded the Guaranteed Income Pilot NDA by more than \$3 million, which is a 24 percent increase from the FY23 Approved Budget. Guaranteed Income Pilot Program was funded to help people to e.g., pay their rent.
 - The Council recognized the extraordinary work of the County's nonprofit organizations and approved additional funding so that eligible contracts can be increased by three percent. The Council added more than \$850,000 to the budget to provide supplemental funding to organizations that serve and care for residents with developmental disabilities and increased funding for the supplement to adult medical day care providers.
 - The Council also supported funding the County's Minority Health Initiatives and programs and approved more than \$2.5 million in funds to continue their essential and culturally competent work in communities across the County by providing guidance, resources and health care to some of the County's most vulnerable residents.
 - **Recreation**
 - The Council funded total expenditures of more than \$60 million for the Department of Recreation. This is a nine percent increase compared to last year's budget. It includes more than \$3 million for senior adult programs
 - Additionally, the Council fully funded refurbishment costs for Damascus Library and Senior Center and approved \$1 million in state aid for both Damascus and Long Branch library branches for building and site improvements.

Commented [FP2]: Should this be combined with bullet #3?

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Committee Reports

- *Aging in Community*
 - Wayne mentioned the follow-up and debrief of the Forum, including a list to items to consider for further action. There was also a discussion on universal design and possible further activities. Shawn Brennan will attend the next meeting and discuss AgeFriendly. Betsy noted that today's presentation from Secretary Roques offered ideas for the committee.
- *Health and Wellness-*
 - The project on Life Transitions is being finalized and will go to print shortly and presented to the Summit on Aging in October. Barbara reviewed the recommendations of the Workforce Taskforce.
- *Communications*
 - There will be no June meeting. The Library Liaison program- Almost all the libraries are covered – three remain needing volunteers- Long Branch, Twinbrook and White Oak. This is a once-a-month commitment. The Ambassador program seeks to get the word out about MOCOs programs. Beverly emphasized the need of a designated staff person to coordinate the program. A job description has been drafted and there is plan to begin the program in October. The 50+ program for May is on fashion.
- *Public Policy*
 - David reported on behalf of Morris. Peter Flandreau is the new staff person for the committee. There was a debrief on the council county visits and discussion of the two rent stabilization bills that have been introduced. Janice drafted a letter to the MD Dept of Health re the nursing home inspection issue that has been sent out and widely distributed. Additional members are needed to do the work of the committee.

New Business

Mona- The Commission needs a Spanish-speaking member. David agrees the commission needs to look and sound like the county. He directed the nominating committee to keep this in mind and urged all members to invite their friends and contacts to engage in the activities of the committee. Barbara and Wayne suggested people to approach.

Adjourn 12:03

Attachments: Point in time homelessness report
Centenarian Celebration n snippet
CoA Commissioner Nanine Meiklejohn Obituary
Mont County Minority Health programs report
Montgomery County Council Preliminary Budget Vote
Nursing Home report and statement by U.S. Senator Casey
Letter to MD Dept of Health Secretary from CoA
Advertisement of World Elder Abuse Day Event

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